

AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 5, 11, 16, and 20.

Please amend claims 1, 4, 12, 15, and 33 as follows:

C¹ 1. (Twice Amended) A method of treating systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) in an individual, comprising administering to the individual a conjugate comprising (a) a non-immunogenic valency platform molecule and (b) two or more molecules comprising double stranded DNA (dsDNA) epitopes, wherein the dsDNA epitopes are polynucleotides which specifically bind to an antibody from the individual which specifically binds to double stranded DNA, wherein affinity of the polynucleotides for the antibody from the individual is used as a basis for selecting the individual to receive or continue to receive the treatment, and wherein said treatment comprises administering said conjugate to the individual.

C² 4. (Thrice Amended) A method of treating SLE in an individual, comprising administering to the individual a conjugate comprising (a) a non-immunogenic valency platform molecule and (b) two or more polynucleotides which specifically bind to an antibody from the individual which specifically binds to double stranded DNA, said polynucleotides consisting essentially of the sequence 5'-GTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGT-3' (SEQ ID NO:1), wherein the apparent equilibrium dissociation constant (K_D') for the polynucleotides with respect to the antibody from the individual before or upon initiation of treatment is less than about 0.8 mg IgG per ml, wherein said K_D' value or a functional equivalent thereof is used as a basis for selecting the individual to receive the treatment, and wherein said treatment comprises administering said conjugate to the individual.

12. (Twice Amended) A method of treating SLE in an individual comprising:

(a) assessing affinity of an anti-double stranded DNA antibody from the individual with respect to a dsDNA epitope which is to be used in treatment, wherein the individual is selected for treatment based on said antibody affinity; and

C3 (b) treating said selected individual by administering to said selected individual a conjugate comprising (i) a non-immunogenic valency platform molecule and (ii) two or more of the dsDNA epitopes, wherein the dsDNA epitopes are polynucleotides which specifically bind to an antibody from the individual which specifically binds to double stranded DNA.

C4 15. (Thrice Amended) A method of treating SLE in an individual, comprising

(a) assessing before initiation of treatment an apparent equilibrium dissociation constant (K_D') or a functional equivalent thereof for a polynucleotide in a conjugate and an antibody from the individual which specifically binds to double stranded DNA, said conjugate comprising (i) a non-immunogenic valency platform molecule and (ii) two or more polynucleotides which specifically bind to an antibody from the individual which specifically binds to double stranded DNA, said polynucleotides consisting essentially of the sequence 5'-GTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGT-3' (SEQ ID NO:1), wherein the individual is selected to receive the treatment if the K_D' is less than about 0.8 mg IgG per ml; and

(b) administering to the individual the conjugate in an amount sufficient to increase the K_D' .

C5 33. (Twice Amended) A method of treating SLE in an individual, comprising:

(a) assessing before or upon initiation of treatment an apparent equilibrium dissociation constant (K_D') for a dsDNA epitope in or a conjugate and an antibody from the individual which specifically binds to double stranded DNA, said conjugate comprising (i) a non-immunogenic valency platform molecule and (ii) two or more molecules comprising said

epitopes, wherein the said epitopes are polynucleotides which specifically bind to an antibody from the individual which specifically binds to double stranded DNA and

Cb
conv
(b) administering to the individual the conjugate in an amount sufficient to increase the K_D' , wherein treatment is continued if K_D' is increased at least about 20% compared to K_D' before or upon initiation of treatment, and wherein said treatment comprises administration of said conjugate to the individual.

Please add new claims 93-97 as follows:

93. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the individual is a human.

Cb
94. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the individual is a human.

95. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein the individual is a human.

96. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the individual is a human.

97. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein the individual is a human.
